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Social and human rights questions: Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Programme budget implications of the recommendations contained in the report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on its fifth session

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council

I. Introduction

1. In the report on its fifth session,[1] the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommended four draft decisions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.

2. In accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure of the Council, the Secretariat presented estimates of programme budget implications to the Permanent Forum on two of its draft decisions. At that time, the Permanent Forum was informed that owing to time constraints the estimates were preliminary and that the Secretariat would review the estimates and proposals and bring the outcome of the review to the Council's attention when it considered the report of the Permanent Forum.

3. The statement of programme budget implications hereunder reflects the outcome of the review undertaken by the Secretariat and is submitted for the consideration of the Council.

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 23* (E/2006/43).

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II. Draft decision I, entitled "International expert group meeting on the Convention on Biological Diversity international regime on access and benefit-sharing and indigenous peoples' human rights" and draft decision III, entitled "Venue and dates for the sixth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues"

4. Under the terms of draft decisions I and III, the Economic and Social Council would:

(a) Decide to authorize a three-day international expert group meeting on the Convention on Biological Diversity international regime on access and benefit-sharing and indigenous peoples' human rights with the participation of representatives of the United Nations system and five members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and invite other interested intergovernmental organizations, experts from indigenous organizations, and interested Member States to participate as well, and request that the results of the meeting be reported to the Permanent Forum at its sixth session, in May 2007;

(b) Decide that the sixth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues shall be held at the United Nations Centre in Bangkok from 14 to 25 May 2007.

III. Activities by which the proposed decisions would be carried out

5. Should the Council adopt draft decisions I and III, the programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007 would be modified as follows: inclusion of "a three-day international expert group meeting on the Convention on Biological Diversity international regime on access and benefit-sharing and indigenous peoples' human rights" under paragraph 9.61 (a) (vi) of section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. The adoption of the draft decisions by the Council would also mean the addition of the proposed international expert group meeting to the approved calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 2006-2007 and its modification with regard to the holding of the sixth session of the Permanent Forum in Bangkok in May 2007.

6. With regard to draft decision I, it is anticipated that the three-day international expert group meeting would be held from 17 to 19 January 2007 in New York. While additional conference-servicing requirements could be accommodated from within the existing capacity, the convening of the international expert group meeting in New York would give rise to travel, daily subsistence and terminal costs for five Forum members and seven international experts, amounting to $87,300. There is no related provision in the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 to finance the projected travel requirements for the international expert group meeting. Therefore, an additional appropriation of $87,300 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 would have to be sought from the General Assembly.

7. With regard to draft decision III, it is anticipated that the sixth session of the Permanent Forum would be held in Bangkok from 14 to 25 May 2007. The total number of meetings would amount to 20. While the conference-servicing requirements for that session, amounting to $1,262,800, would be absorbed within the related provision, already programmed under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, there would be additional costs of $33,600 arising from the use of conference facilities of the Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to be charged to section 18, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

8. The convening of the sixth session of the Forum in Bangkok in May 2007 would also give rise to travel, daily subsistence and terminal requirements for: (a) 16 Forum members ($159,200); (b) 11 members of the Forum secretariat and substantive staff of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs ($101,800) and (c) 43 staff of the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management, including 10 conference servicing staff and 33 interpreters ($360,800), amounting to total requirements of $621,800.

IV. Additional requirements for the biennium 2006-2007

9. Should the Council adopt draft decisions I and III, related additional requirements of $742,700 for travel, daily subsistence allowance, terminal expenses and conference servicing for the sixth session of the Permanent Forum, and for use of ESCAP conference facilities, at full cost, would arise as described in the table below.

Additional requirements

(United States dollars)

	Expert group meeting	*Sixth session of the Forum*	*Total*
Section 2. General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management			
Travel, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses of conference servicing and support staff	—	360 800	360 800
Section 9. Economic and social affairs			
Travel, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses of members, experts and staff	87 300	261 000	348 300
Section 18. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific			
Use of ESCAP conference facilities	—	33 600	33 600
Total	**87 300**	**655 400**	**742 700**

V. Potential for absorption during the biennium 2006-2007

10. A related provision of $165,000 in the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 to finance the Forum members' travel requirements for the sixth session, as well as a related provision for the servicing of the sixth session of the Permanent Forum have already been programmed under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. Therefore, the total additional appropriation, which would have to be sought from the General Assembly, amounts to $577,700, consisting of $360,800 under section 2, General Assembly affairs and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management; $183,300 under section 9, Economic and social affairs; and $33,600 under section 18, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

11. Consequently, should the Council adopt draft decisions I and III, an additional appropriation of $577,700 would be required over and above the resources of sections 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, 9, Economic and social affairs, and 18, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

VI. Contingency fund

12. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditure derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditure is proposed that exceeds the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned would be implemented only through the redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or the modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities would have to be deferred to a later biennium.

13. The additional provisions cannot be met from the contingency fund as other activities in the biennium 2006-2007 charged against the fund are expected to exhaust the contingency fund prior to the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. It is not possible at this stage to identify activities under sections 2, 9 and 18 of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 that could be curtailed, deferred, terminated or modified in order to meet the net additional requirement of $577,700, although preliminary review leads the Secretariat to assume that some absorption of the estimated requirements is possible. The Secretariat will seek in the coming months to identify areas from which resources can be redeployed to meet the requirements for the Permanent Forum in the biennium 2006-2007 and will inform the General Assembly of how to meet the additional requirements in the context of the second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.

VII. Conclusion

14. **Should the Council adopt draft decisions I and III contained in the report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on its fifth session, additional resources totalling $577,700 would be required, consisting of $360,800 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management; $183,300 under section 9, Economic and social affairs; and $33,600 under section 18, Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007.**